

i24 PRINCE BULOW AND HIS
MEMOIRS

been formed at the triumphant elections of 1907 was broken, and when the bill was rejected by a majority of eight the Chancellor promptly resigned. Though the world was informed that his retirement was the result of the hostile vote, every one behind the scenes was aware that the defeat of the inheritance tax was the occasion, not the cause, for he was not responsible to the Reichstag. Much as he loved power he had no wish to remain when his master was tired of him. Both men, with the memory of 1890 in their minds, were glad of a pretext which avoided the necessity of a spectacular breach.

The last chapter describes the parting. Bulow had accepted the Foreign Office on board the *Hoben^pplern* in the harbour of Kiel in June, 1897, and he surrendered the Chancellorship in the same place in June, 1909. He found the monarch embarrassed and impatient, but not a word was said on either side of the real cause of the separation. Some idea of the final conversation may be gathered from extracts from his report:

W. I have chosen Bethmann. I am sure you will agree. He is true as gold.

B. He is the best man for domestic politics, but he knows absolutely nothing of foreign affairs.

W. (laughing and gay). Leave foreign affairs to me. I have learned something in your school. It will be all right.

B. I have two requests for Your Majesty, very serious and very urgent.

W. (glancing impatiently at his wrist watch). Dear Bernhard, I have really no time*

B. I am sorry. I will be brief. Try to reach a naval agreement with England.

W. (very annoyed). Have I not told you often enough that I allow no one to dictate to me about ship-building? Every such proposal is a humiliation for me and my navy.

B. How should our honour suffer if we

willingly reach an
agreement with England which diminishes the
danger of war ?

KF. (decisively). I do not believe in such a
danger. And
what is your second request ?

B. Do not repeat the Bosnian action.

W. (suspiciously). But that was a triumph for
you.

B. The situation' of kst winter will not recur.

W. So you think I must be careful in the
Balkans ?

B. Yes, there even more than elsewhere. That
is the danger-
point.

W. (looking at his watch again). I won't forget.
You can